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ABSTRACT

The problems that pervade professional schools are not dissimilar to those of undergraduate education. Graduates emerge from both with questionable levels of preparation; also, similar problems exist in professional development and curricular improvement. However, three major differences are found between these two levels of education with respect to organizational change and renewal, curricular modification, and professional development: (1) some professional schools at major universities rival undergraduate athletics in pride among alumni, faculty, students, and administrators; (2) professional schools' overall visibility and the more immediate and publicly accepted contributions of their graduates have made them much more attractive for funding by the government and private foundations; and (3) they are so fragmented in their specialties that they view their students and the professions fragmentally, and that attitude spills over into curricular and faculty development. Faculty development has become big business, but the means have become confused with the ends, and the basic goal of improving educational quality has been lost. The institutional change project at the UCLA School of Dentistry, using the systems approach, was developed to establish the kind of environment that would best facilitate and be most relevant to the process of faculty and instructional development. The faculty were involved in a goal-setting process, and this participation fostered enthusiasm for further development. Faculty development can be most effective and productive when it is part of an overall institutional scheme for the improvement of teaching and learning. (HSE)

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A VIEW FROM THE TOP LOOKING SIDEWAYS:
PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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The problems that pervade professional schools are not dissimilar to those of undergraduate education. Graduates emerge from both with questionable levels of preparation. Professional schools represent the best of things and the worst of things in education. The same is true for professional development and curricular improvement.

Attempts are being made to nurture the professional growth and development of faculty members and administrators at professional schools, but unfortunately, similar to the attempts found in undergraduate institutions, there is a staggering amount of pompous rhetoric on the value of professional development; a proliferation of untested, pedestrian models of varying and unnecessary complexity; overly simplistic and equally pompous conceptualizations of development components; and an influx of poorly designed, haphazard and fragmented attempts at program implementation.

One finds three major differences between these two levels of education with respect to organizational change and renewal, curricular modification and professional development. First of all, some professional schools at major universities rival under-

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graduate athletics in terms of alumni pride. This pride among constituents has spilled over on to the faculty, administration and students who are "proud to work there and proud to learn there", and as a result, programs have been shielded from critical examination. Whereas the quality of undergraduate programs has at least recently been questioned on many fronts, the quality of the instructional programs in professional schools has never been seriously challenged.

A second difference is that professional schools' overall visibility and the more immediate and publicly accepted contributions of their graduates have made them much more attractive for funding by the government and private foundations. Money for curricular improvement has been far easier to obtain, and in some cases represents an embarrassment of riches. The third difference is that professional schools are so fragmented in their specialities that they view their students and the professions fragmentally. Unfortunately, they view curricular and faculty development in the same way, and much of the popular literature in professional development reinforces this point of view. Models or theories of instructional, organizational, personal and other development components do not provide a cohesive, integrated example to be followed.

Still, many professional schools are taking steps to improve their educational programs in a number of areas. Some have added to their staffs persons trained in educational psychology, learning theory and instructional technology. Others have available to faculty a number of the most recent technological advances in

instructional equipment. In a number of these instances, however, both the equipment and the "experts" lie dormant. Some of the most lonely and frustrated people I know, excluding the Maytag repairman, are educators surrounded by magnificent learning laboratories in professional schools. They have not been able to get the faculty to use it. In most cases, they forgot to show them how! Rarely has anyone decided what the goal of these educational experts or the technology should be. Too often there is no policy as to how the students or the instructional program are to benefit from them. One example of many can illustrate most of the problems I have discussed up to this point.

I recently spent a few days at a Dental School which is regarded without question as one of the finest in the country -- by whatever criteria people use to make such pronouncements. This school is in its fourth year of trying to spend \$5 million on curricular improvement. So far they have used almost all of these funds to buy instructional hardware and educational specialists. There are approximately 600 students in the school, and they have a television studio which would rival most local network affiliates and more educators than most schools of education -- sixty-five! The complex in which the equipment and people are housed represents one of the most fantastic learning resource centers I have seen. However, during the time I spent viewing the facilities in the center, I saw very few students and no faculty. I never did find many students, but I did find the faculty in their laboratories. That's why it is considered one of the best schools in the country! Research productivity wins again.

I talked with several faculty and found that they were well aware of the existence of the facilities and personnel (how could they miss it/them?), but they were reluctant to utilize the unfamiliar resources and were not sure how they would help their teaching. The administrators are currently wondering if there should be "some sort of" faculty development program to counteract this situation.

This professional school is far from an extreme example. Even others which do have programs called "faculty development" have typically instituted the same manner of uncoordinated activities without the benefit of a systematic needs assessment or a clear definition of purpose. The quality of instruction is still criminal in law schools and a sickness pervading medical and dental schools. A sound instructional foundation is also lacking in architecture schools.

Why we are where we are.

It is not very difficult to diagnose the cause of the instructional malady that pervades our professional schools. Like all other academic disciplines, they have clung tenaciously to the time-honored shibboleth that the mere possession of a medical, dental, architectural or any other doctoral or professional degree qualifies a person as a teacher. In point of fact, like other faculty, they receive no training as teachers during their own professional training. Like other faculty, they are rewarded primarily for research productivity and professional stature. Few are encouraged to, so few devote significant portions of their time upgrading their instructional skills or systematically evaluating the effectiveness of their instruction.

Certification boards further compound the problem for professional school education. Knowing full well that students must pass the boards in order to obtain professional licenses, many faculty have come to accept certificating boards as the ultimate tests of student learning whether or not these examinations are really relevant to the goals of the school or the needs of the population. Instructional programs are too often evaluated by students' performance on classroom examinations. The question of how much benefit the course is to improving the students' ability to function as professionals is rarely, if ever, asked. Unfortunately, faculty development as currently practiced will not rectify the situation.

The danger is that as more professional schools rush to jump on the bandwagon in the hopes of winning Federal or foundation money (or even in the belief that such programs are effective), they will institute ever-more shaky, shot-gun programs which at best represent tokenism; at worst, they will lead to an alienation of both faculty and administrators from the whole notion of improving the quality of education through faculty development. The existence of faculty development programs for their own sake appears to have become the norm.

Faculty development has become "big business", but the means have become confused with the ends, and the basic goal, that of improving the quality of education -- the goal which gave rise to the faculty development movement in the first place -- has been lost. Faculty development has become an end in itself and if the

current messy state continues, it is destined to fulfill the prediction of many and become just another fad.

Such an end would be unfortunate, but it is inevitable unless we back up a little and reexamine the issue from its proper perspective. It may well be that the reason it is presently difficult, if not impossible, to develop models, replicable programs or even guidelines, is not that faculty at different institutions are so dissimilar, as some contend, but that the needs of the institutions are different.

If we do not want to be there, what can we do?

The ultimate goal of any educational institution must be to prepare its students for both work and life. Achievement of that goal, of course, depends critically upon the curriculum of the school, which in turn, depends upon its goals, their value and the extent to which they are achieved by the students.

Institutions of higher education generally, and professional schools in particular, are becoming increasingly aware that they must give more rigorous attention to the outcomes of their instructional programs. As a result, some have begun to systematically evaluate the full range of vocational, intellectual and personal attitudes and abilities of their graduates beyond just incremental stages of basic skill achievement; they are finally becoming concerned with the totality of their "products".

Although this new awareness has led to concerted efforts on the part of many professional schools to evaluate their curricula, most such evaluations view the curriculum only in its own light, without regard for long-range school and programmatic goals. Even

when rather specific goals have been defined, evaluations cannot be made merely on the basis of their achievement. The goals themselves must be evaluated in order to determine their worth within the context of the overall program.

Many attempts at curricular change, even those based on sound evaluative data, do not extend their scope beyond the development of modularized instructional materials or "innovative" course offerings. While the development of such elements may well be effective approaches to short-term curricular change, they must be paralleled by the development of both a climate receptive to change and a process of continuous, systematic evaluation in order to maximize the potential impact on teaching and learning. The planning, development and implementation of long-range, substantive and meaningful change is a complex process that necessitates an awareness and consideration of many factors.

In order to establish the kind of environment that would best facilitate and be most relevant to the process of faculty and instructional development, Clare Rose and I, on behalf of the Evaluation and Training Institute, designed and implemented an institutional change project at the UCLA School of Dentistry based on a systems concept. Three basic assumptions were made regarding the program: 1) that the goal of curricular change and faculty development is the improvement of teaching and learning; 2) that any really meaningful changes in the curriculum and, ultimately, improvement in the teaching-learning process, must be fully integrated with a rigorous, comprehensive evaluation; and 3) the focus of such an evaluation must be on outcomes -- outcomes

in terms of student achievement and satisfaction; faculty motivation, development and satisfaction; the responsiveness of course offerings and curricular sequencing; and finally, outcomes in terms of the total school environment.

The first step in the process was to establish systematically developed, measurable goals for the School and its departments. Collaboration among the various constituent groups within the School of Dentistry was a major part of the project's implementation plan. Since the intent of the program was curricular and organizational evaluation and responsive change, it was not enough to just "involve" faculty or assess their needs superficially. They needed to generate, as well as agree upon, the goals themselves (with technical assistance provided by us) in order for them to feel that the goals were indeed theirs, and thus commit themselves to their attainment.

As a result, we worked with a sub-committee of the standing curricular committee, which included one member from each of the three major curricular divisions in the school, a representative of the student body and a member of the administration. This group solicited ideas from the general faculty and students and drew up a tentative list of issues, directions and concerns which formed the basis for the School's first-order goals. The goals were then sent to the entire faculty and a 25 percent sample of students for review. Based upon their revisions and suggestions, the goals were refined, resubmitted once again and accepted.

Similar procedures were then instituted to establish goals for each of the 14 sections within the School. Throughout the whole

process, faculty and student cooperation was outstanding! Over 90 percent of the faculty and more than 60 percent of the students participated in the goal formulation process, and, as a result, became increasingly interested and involved in the whole project. As they clarified more explicitly what they wanted to teach, faculty began to question their effectiveness and wanted to improve their current teaching skills as well as to add a broader range of teaching methods to their repertoire from which they could choose.

Also as a result of the goal-specification process, the faculty came to realize that student complaints about classroom and clinic evaluation procedures were justified. In many areas particularly in clinical practice, faculty had not established definitive criteria for student performance. At the same time, they were disturbed that students were not performing "up to standard" without realizing that they had never established what that standard was. This awareness led the faculty to ask for assistance in defining criteria developing tests and evaluating their own teaching effectiveness on the basis of their students' performance.

As a result of their renewed interest in teaching and evaluation, the faculty asked for faculty development. They asked us to design and conduct an entire series of in-service courses addressed to a wide range of topics: from methods' classes on improving lectures to understanding and working with students' different styles of learning. The faculty's participation in these programs was so enthusiastic that the administration designated one-half

day each week as "Faculty Development Day". Clinics and laboratories are closed and classes are not held so that all faculty are free to attend the variety of seminar sessions and workshops offered. And attend they do! Over ninety percent participation has been recorded, and the last evaluation of the in-service courses -- after four terms -- found the faculty overwhelmingly asking for continuation. But the point is not that the faculty are attending in such numbers or with such enthusiasm, but that the faculty development program which emerged as a result of institutional self-analysis is directly related to the needs of the institution and the needs of the faculty as they relate to the institutional needs.

During the goal clarification process, the faculty and students also indicated their dissatisfaction with existing instructional materials and the absence of others which were necessary if certain objectives were to be achieved. Thus, several faculty began working with us on the development of written and mediated self-instructional modules. In fact, one entire section will be completely modularized by the end of the next academic year. This, too, has had an impact on the School and has formed the basis for another series of faculty seminars. As word spread about both the achievement and satisfaction of the students who used the newly developed materials, other faculty wanted to augment their materials with self-instructional modules. As a result, courses teaching faculty how to develop self-instructional materials have been the recent focus of the faculty development program, while other programs are continuing as well.

Recent graduates of the school have also been surveyed and interviewed to determine the level of their knowledge as well as the actual behaviors they employ in their practices as they relate to each of the goals which have been established. The results of the survey are being used to evaluate the worth and viability of the goals for future graduates. The curriculum is being revised accordingly and the cycle of change and renewal is continuing. Other types of needed faculty development programs will no doubt be continuously identified in the process.

What has evolved at the UCLA School of Dentistry over the last three years is a process of change that has important implications for those interested in promoting faculty development and improving instruction. Rather than instituting a "development" program aimed at faculty, as is the fashion these days, we worked with the faculty and administration -- clarifying instructional and organizational problems, needs and values; integrating outcome and process data; developing evaluation mechanisms; and identifying areas of improvement needed in curricular programs and instructional strategies. It is impossible to separate any of these activities as curricular change, instructional improvement, organizational development or faculty development per se. They are all of these, and yet the sum is more. Each is an integral part of institutional self-analysis.

Faculty development can be most effective and productive when it is part of an overall institutional scheme for the improvement of teaching and learning. In fact, although faculty involvement in the whole process is mandatory from the very

beginning of the approach described above, as illustrated in the attached diagram, faculty development is several steps down the road of renewal. Only in this position can it serve as both a stimulus and a reactor in an ongoing process of responsive change.

POLICY ANALYSIS PROCESS MODEL : INSTITUTIONAL RENEWAL AND DEVELOPMENT FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF TEACHING / LEARNING

